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Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force

(for the period 9 December 2003 through 21 June 2004)

I. Introduction

1. The present report gives an account of the activities of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) during the last six months pursuant to the mandate contained in Security Council resolution 350 (1974) of 31 May 1974 and extended in subsequent resolutions, most recently Security Council resolution 1520 (2003) of 22 December 2003.

II. Situation in the area and activities of the Force

2. During the period under review, the ceasefire in the Israel-Syria sector was maintained and the area of operation of UNDOF remained generally quiet, except for the Shab'a farms area (Area 6), which experienced activity originating from the area of operation of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), described in my reports on UNIFIL.

3. UNDOF supervised the area of separation by means of fixed positions and patrols to ensure that military forces of either party were excluded from it. The Force also carried out fortnightly inspections of equipment and force levels in the areas of limitation. Liaison officers from the party concerned accompanied the inspection teams. As in the past, both sides denied inspection teams access to some of their positions and imposed some restrictions on the Force's freedom of movement. In addition, Israeli national customs officials continued to operate at the Israel Defense Forces post at the UNDOF crossing gate between Israeli-occupied Golan and the Syrian Arab Republic.

4. The Force continued to assist the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) with facilities for mail and the passage of persons through the area of separation. Within the means available, medical treatment was provided to the local population on request. During the last six months, UNDOF assisted in the crossing of 21 students and facilitated the crossing of one couple on medical grounds. In addition, UNDOF provided protection at two weddings.

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5. In the area of operation, especially in the area of separation, mines continued to pose a threat to UNDOF personnel and local inhabitants. Due to the age of the mines and their deteriorating explosives, this threat has in fact increased. UNDOF continued to support the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) in activities to promote mine awareness among the civilian population.

6. The Force Commander, Major General Bala Nanda Sharma, and his staff maintained close contact with the military authorities of Israel and the Syrian Arab Republic. Both sides generally cooperated with the Force in the execution of its tasks.

7. As at 31 May 2004, UNDOF comprised 1,050 troops, including National Support Elements, from Austria (364), Canada (190), Japan (45), Nepal (2), Poland (357) and Slovakia (92). In addition, 78 military observers of the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO) assisted the Force in carrying out its tasks. UNDOF has completed two thirds of its three-year modernization programme. A map showing the deployment of the Force is attached to the present report.

III. Financial aspects

8. By its resolution 57/324 of 18 June 2003, the General Assembly appropriated the amount of $41.8 million gross, equivalent to $3.5 million gross per month, for the maintenance of the Force for the period from 1 July 2003 to 30 June 2004. Should the Council decide to extend the mandate of the Force beyond 30 June 2004, as recommended in paragraph 13 below, the cost of maintaining the Force will be limited to the amounts approved by the General Assembly.

9. As at 18 May 2004, unpaid assessed contributions to the UNDOF special account for the period from the inception of the Force to 30 April 2003 amounted to $17 million. Total outstanding assessed contributions for all peacekeeping operations as at the same date amounted to $1,273 million.

IV. Implementation of Security Council resolution 338 (1973)

10. The Security Council, while deciding in its resolution 1520 (2003) to renew the mandate of UNDOF for a further period of six months, until 30 June 2004, also called upon the parties concerned to implement immediately its resolution 338 (1973) of 22 October 1973, and requested the Secretary-General to submit, at the end of the period, a report on the developments in the situation and the measures taken to implement resolution 338 (1973). The search for a peaceful settlement in the Middle East and, in particular, the efforts undertaken at various levels to implement resolution 338 (1973) were dealt with in the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in the Middle East (A/58/278), submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolutions 57/111 and 57/112 of 3 December 2002.

V. Observations

11. The situation in the Israel-Syria sector has remained generally quiet. UNDOF, which was established in May 1974 to supervise the ceasefire called for by the Security Council and the agreement on disengagement between Syrian and Israeli

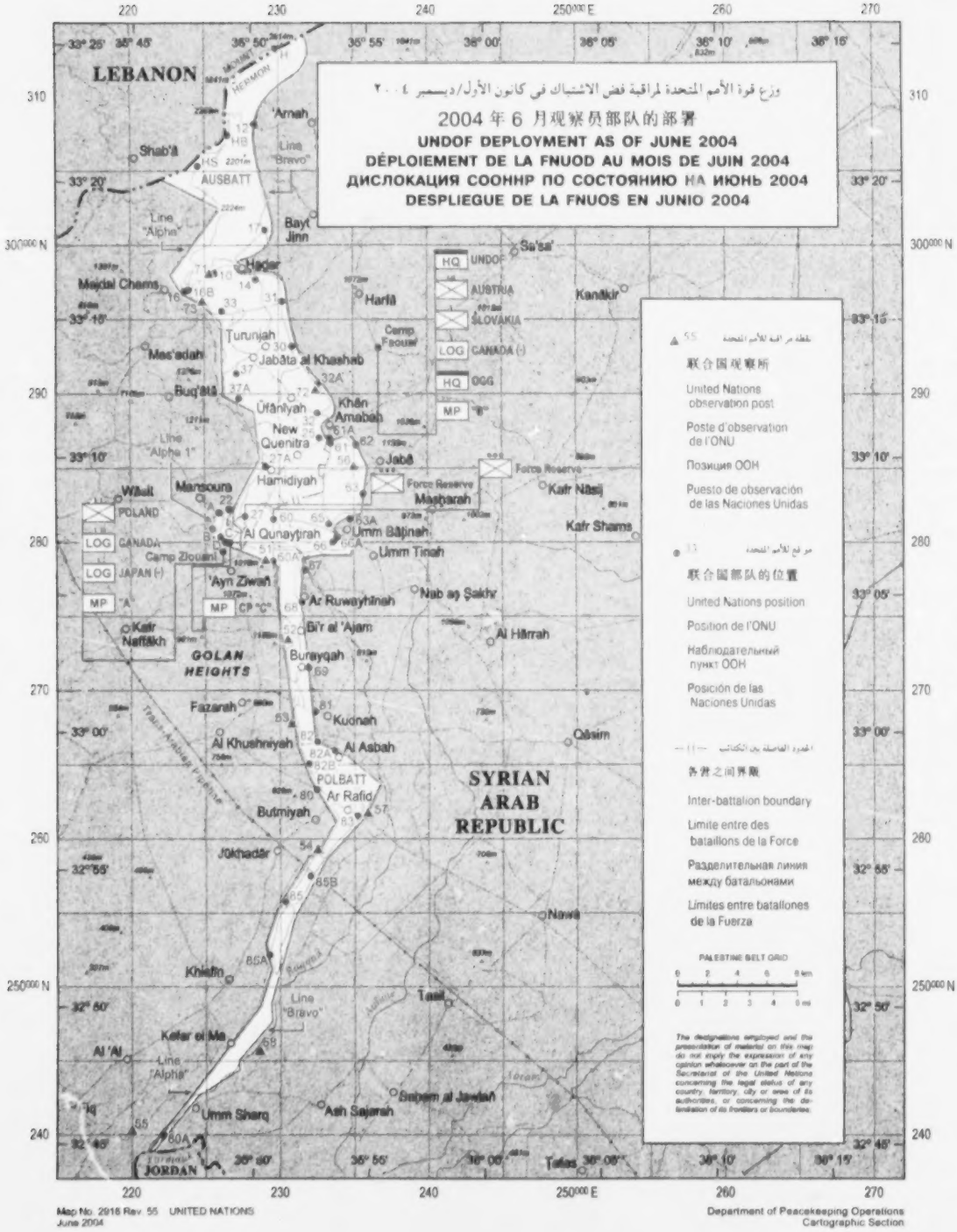
forces of 31 May 1974, has continued to perform its functions effectively, with the cooperation of the parties.

12. Nevertheless, the situation in the Middle East is very tense and is likely to remain so, unless and until a comprehensive settlement covering all aspects of the Middle East problem can be reached. I hope that determined efforts will be made by all concerned to tackle the problem in all its aspects with a view to arriving at a just and durable peace settlement, as called for by the Security Council in its resolution 338 (1973).

13. Under the prevailing circumstances, I consider the continued presence of UNDOF in the area to be essential. I therefore recommend that the Security Council extend the mandate of the Force for a further period of six months, until 31 December 2004. The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic has given its assent to the proposed extension. The Government of Israel has also expressed its agreement.

14. In making this recommendation, I must draw attention to the shortfall in the funding of the Force. Currently, unpaid assessments amount to some $17 million. This sum represents money owed to the Member States that contribute the troops who make up the Force. I appeal to the Member States to pay their assessments promptly and in full and to clear all remaining arrears.

15. In conclusion, I wish to pay a tribute to Major General Sharma and to the men and women serving with UNDOF. They have performed with efficiency and devotion to duty the important tasks assigned to them by the Security Council. I take this opportunity to express my appreciation to the Governments contributing troops to UNDOF and to those that provide the UNTSO military observers assigned to the Force.


وزع قوة الأمم المتحدة لمراقبة فض الاشتباك في كانون الأول/ديسمبر ٢٠٠٤
2004 年 6 月观察员部队的部署
UNDOF DEPLOYMENT AS OF JUNE 2004
DÉPLOIEMENT DE LA FNUOD AU MOIS DE JUIN 2004
ДИСЛОКАЦИЯ СООННР ПО СОСТОЯНИЮ НА ИЮНЬ 2004
DESPLIEGUE DE LA FNUOS EN JUNIO 2004
LEBANON
SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC
JORDAN
GOLAN HEIGHTS
'Arnah
Shab'ā
Bayt Jinn
Ḥaḍar
Majdal Shams
Ḥarīṭā
Ṣa'sa'
Kanākir
Ṭurunjah
Mas'adah
Jabāta al Khashab
Buq'ātā
Ufānīyah
Khān Arnabah
New Quneitra
Jabā
Hamidiyah
Mashārah
Kafr Nāsij
Wāsil
Mansoura
Al Qunayṭirah
Umm Bāṭinah
Kafr Shams
Umm Tīnah
'Ayn Zīwān
Nab aş Şakhr
Ar Ruwayḥinah
Bi'r al 'Ajam
Al Ḥārrah
Kafr Naffākh
Burayqah
Fazarah
Kudnah
Al Khushniyah
Al Asbah
Qāsim
Ar Rafid
Butmīyah
Jōkhadār
Nawā
Khiafīn
Taasil
Kafar el Ma
Al 'Al
Umm Sharq
Ash Sajarah
Sabsam al Jawlah
Tafas
Line "Alpha"
Line "Bravo"
Line "Alpha 1"
UNDOF
AUSTRIA
SLOVAKIA
CANADA (-)
OGG
Force Reserve
POLAND
CANADA
JAPAN (-)
联合国观察所
United Nations observation post
Poste d'observation de l'ONU
Позиция ООН
Puesto de observación de las Naciones Unidas
联合国部队的位置
United Nations position
Position de l'ONU
Наблюдательный пункт ООН
Posición de las Naciones Unidas
各营之间界限
Inter-battalion boundary
Limite entre des bataillons de la Force
Разделительная линия между батальонами
Límites entre batallones de la Fuerza
PALESTINE BELT GRID
The designations employed and the presentation of material on this map do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the Secretariat of the United Nations concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.
Map No. 2916 Rev. 55 UNITED NATIONS
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Department of Peacekeeping Operations
Cartographic Section